## REMARKS

Applicants initially wish to affirm the election of claims 1-9 and 18-21. Withdrawn claims 10-17 have now been cancelled without prejudice to their being re-presented in a divisional application.

Applicants additionally wish to point out that while the Office Action indicates that the supplemental information disclosure statement filed on February 24, 2004 has been considered, no initialed copy of the statement was enclosed with the Office Action. The Office Action included only an initialed copy of the information disclosure statement filed on January 12, 2004. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to clarify in his next communication whether both information disclosure statements have been considered.

Claims 1-7, 18, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bresson et al. (U.S. 5,352,507). Bresson et al. teach a seamless multi-layer printing blanket which includes a printing surface layer 6, an elastomer layer 5, and a compressible layer 4. The Examiner refers to Fig. 3, which illustrates the blanket adhered to a metal carrier layer 10 which is then adhered to a printing cylinder 1 with an optional adhesive 3 ("the carrier, in turn, is mounted upon a cylinder 1 using an optional layer of suitable adhesive 3;" col. 5, lines 59-61).

The Examiner has taken the position that the optional adhesive 3 reads on the polymer limitation of claim 1 because it may comprise a "urethane" adhesive. However, the adhesive 3 of Bresson is used in conjunction with a *separate* metal carrier layer 10, not with a metal base ply which is integral with the printing blanket construction as claimed. As shown in Fig. 3 and as described at col. 5, lines 53-61 of Bresson, multi-layer blanket 2 includes only layers 4, 5, and 6. Carrier 10 is a separate construction. Figs. 4-8 also describe the blanket as including layers 4-8. Accordingly, Bresson does not teach or suggest a printing blanket construction including a polymer on a metal base ply of a printing blanket as claimed.

And, in at least one embodiment of the present invention, there is an adhesive present between the polymer and the metal base ply. See the specification at page 3, lines 25-27 and new claim 22. Bresson does not teach a construction in which a polymer is adhered with an adhesive to a metal base ply as claimed.

Further, there is no teaching or suggestion in Bresson that an adhesive layer would function as a protective polymeric coating for the purpose of reducing corrosion and abrasion of printing blankets and cylinders. While the Examiner has taken the position that "any coating reduces the metal cylinders contact with the environment and, therefore, will inherently reduce corrosion and abrasion," applicants disagree. With this amendment, applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 18 to recite the minimum thickness of the polymeric layer. This amendment is believed to further distinguish the claims over Bresson et al. As taught in the specification, the thickness of the polymer layer is at least about 0.0013 cm and may be up to about 0.51 cm. See the specification at page 5, lines 18-20. There is no motivation to provide Bresson et al. with a polymeric layer on a metal base ply having the claimed thickness as they do not teach or suggest a desire for reducing corrosion and abrasion of a printing blanket and printing cylinder.

Claims 1-9 and 18-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bression et al. (5,352,507) in view of Herbison (U.S. 5,366,784). Herbison teaches a method of inhibiting corrosion of blanket cylinders in which zinc particles or powder are applied to the surface of the printing blanket. The Examiner has taken the position that it would have been obvious to apply zinc to the adhesive layer 3 of Bresson for the purpose of preventing corrosion. However, there is no motivation to make the proposed modification as Bresson et al. do not teach or suggest a desire for preventing corrosion and abrasion, nor do they teach a metal base ply of a printing blanket including a polymer thereon. Nor does Herbison teach or suggest reducing corrosion and abrasion of **both** the printing blanket and printing cylinder as claimed, but rather only corrosion of printing blanket cylinders.

For all of the above reasons, applicants submit that claims 1-9 and 18-21, as amended, and new claim 22 are patentable over the cited references. Early notification of allowable subject matter is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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